

state were well represented. The reports were all written and were of a high order. The discussions were lively and interesting and all conceded that the work accomplished was all that could have possibly been expected. The Convention adopted a resolution that the state appropriation for the College indebtedness be accepted. The brethren here feel they are too far away to derive benefit from the College, but there is a loyalty to the church found here that is rarely exceeded anywhere and they say we will put up our money at once and as soon as the east notify us that all the money needed to cover the debt is on deposit our portion will go forth. So now our energetic College people in the East will have "to put up or etc." Convention adjourned on Saturday, third day, noon. Brother Wolfe remains over Sunday to give them some preaching service. Also a number of the rest of us are lingering around over Sunday feeling that we are both to leave the place.

Turlock, Cal.

PROFITABLE VERSATILITY.

Z. GRENNELL.

"He tried to do everything." It was said by way of explaining the signal lack of success that attended a certain pastorate. The young man started well, there was a good deal of enthusiasm engendered over his beginning, he was devoted, blameless in character and conduct, industrious, well-furnished, possessed of gifts of speech, but "he tried to do everything." Instead of concentrating his energies upon the few things that lay at the heart of his legitimate work, he diffused himself in many and diverse lines of effort and so he flattened out and failed. The obvious moral is, let the pastor focalize instead of radiate.

"He could do nothing." This was said by way of explaining the marked success of a certain pastor. He made a place for himself and gathered power in the community by his ability to pursue many different lines of work and do it well. In the pulpit and in the parlor, in the prayer-meeting and on the platform, in the inquiry room and in the columns of the press, in the after-dinner speech and in the scientific convention, in leading the singing and in making pictures on the blackboard, in all, he was apt, ready, proficient. "He could do everything." He was a host in himself—a dozen men rolled into one. And so he succeeded. The obvious moral is, let the pastor radiate rather than concentrate.

What shall we say to these things? Is versatility good, or otherwise? As

respects the two men referred to above, it is easy to see that they are not in the same category. It is not that versatility failed in the one case and succeeded in the other; but that the first tried to be versatile and the second was versatile. The failure of the first was the failure of one who attempted to do that for which he was not fitted; the success of the second was the success of one who did what he was able to do.

That is to say, versatility is a gift—like other gifts, inborn but subject to modification by culture or disuse—like other gifts, an endowment to be prized, developed and put to service. Like other gifts it may be added, versatility is more widely conferred than men are accustomed to think. They are few who are shut up by nature to one form of efficient activity, few who cannot turn themselves with a fair degree of ease and facility in more than one direction of effort. On the other hand, they are few who possess a great many gifts of diverse sorts. Between these two extremes we all have place.

Versatility is in some respects a dangerous gift. It furnishes special temptations to fitfulness that works by transient moods, to diffuseness that makes for area of work rather than depth of work, to conceit that overestimates the reach and value of one's power. The versatile man is apt to overlook the fact that it is well-nigh impossible for one to excel in many things, so he omits the cultivation of the specialty for which he has planned. Even Michael Angelo, that remarkable man who was supereminent as sculptor, painter, architect, engineer, anatomist and author, made sculpture his specialty, and treated his other arts as incidentals. It is a saying as true as it is familiar, "A jack of all trades is master of none."

Still, as already said, versatility is a good thing. To be ambidextrous is better than to be pronouncedly left-handed or right handed. The carpenter who can drive nails with both hands sometimes has his particular and profitable use. It is believed that paralysis of this side and of that side would be less frequent if men learned to use the muscles on both sides of the body in some such way as would tend to keep the body in balance. There are analogous mental conditions; which is simply saying that intellectual versatility, like physical versatility, is worth cultivating.

There are many men who, with commendable industry and excellent results confine their efforts to one or two lines of ascertained efficiency, who might with large advantage awaken and exercise other powers slumbering in them. Instead

of assuming that they can do this or that only, they are warranted in assuming that they could do more if they would with reasonable prudence venture upon new forms of activity. Sometimes a delightful surprise is thus received. A young man, who through business changes lost his position of salesman in a country store, was advised by a friend who had noticed the quality of his voice to put in his unoccupied time in the study of music. Protesting that he could never become a singer, he nevertheless followed the advice, and to-day he is one of the notable tenor soloists of the middle west, with profitable engagements filling the most of his time.

The advantages of a cultivated versatility, cultivated but held subordinate to special and proven lines of work, are many. For one thing, it enriches one's own life, making it worth more to the possessor and to all others. For another thing, it supplies outlets for surplus energy. Again, it offers the relief of temporary and restful change of occupation. Yet again, it multiplies points of sympathetic contact with other minds and many interests.

In all this we do not overlook the excellent word of the great apostle, "This one thing I do." Rather, we emphasize and insist upon it. For it is to be observed that while Paul did the one thing he did it in many ways—by preaching, by writing, by disputing, by praying, by singing; through journeys, through tent-making, through healing; in synagogues, in market places, in lecture halls, in prisons, on shipboard; as Jew, as Roman as freeman, as prisoner, as philosopher, as apostle. When you look his methods over you see in this Paul, who did but one thing, a marvelous facility of adaptation, a manifold versatility that enveloped the one purpose. The one thing for the Christian minister is the preaching of the Gospel, but by a judicious cultivation of versatility he may multiply the tongues with which he speaks.

Chicago, Ill.

ONE may live as a conqueror, a king, or a magistrate, but he must die as a man. The bed of death brings every human being to his pure individuality; to the intense contemplation of that deepest and most solemn of all relations—the relation between the creature and the Creator. Here it is that fame and renown cannot assist us; that all external things must fail to aid us; that even friends, affection, and human love and devotedness, cannot succor us.—*Ex.*